

# PSC Update—May 2020

## Covid-19 and your wellbeing



**Isle of Man**  
Government

*Reillys Ellan Vannin*

### Message from Minister Chris Thomas PSC Chair

There is no doubt that these are challenging times, for public service employers, public servants and the Island community as a whole. I know the Public Services Commission, which I have the honour to chair, is extremely proud of its employees and how you have risen to the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic, whether working remotely or at an alternative location, whether doing what you always do in more challenging times or as one of those who are redeployed to keep key public services running, to resource specific COVID-19 initiatives, you truly are showing that we are all in this together.

Thank you.

Your health and wellbeing is paramount to us and any documents provided are written with that in mind. The Office of Human Resources has updated various other documents, including policies, procedures, codes and guidance forms which you will find at:

<https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

and summarised in this newsletter.

Stay safe and thank you again.

### Looking after your mental health

Ensure you are in a well ventilated room and following basic self-care: healthy eating, sleep, lots of hydration and try to keep to some sort of routine.

Getting moving is easier said than done if you are feeling low or anxious, but it can significantly boost your mood.

Exercise is really good for mental as well as physical wellbeing. If you are able, get into your garden and get daily doses of sunshine.

More information can be found at:

<https://hr.gov.im/media/1825/tips-to-reduce-covid-19-anxiety-2.pdf>

<https://covid19.gov.im/health-wellbeing/mental-health/>



### Useful telephone numbers

#### Coronavirus Information Line 686262

A confidential, free support line for everyone for non-medical queries

#### Line to assist with suspected Covid-19 - 111

However before you call use the online self-assessment at <https://covid19.gov.im>

#### Staff Welfare Service 687027

A confidential support service for Public Service Staff

#### Health and Safety Queries 693323

### For those at the workplace

Many PSC employees have continued to carry out their roles either in the front line, key worker roles or in a support capacity.

The OHR website provides guidance documents which cover such working:

<https://hr.gov.im/media/1832/vehicle-driver-guidance.pdf>

<https://hr.gov.im/media/1835/building-users-guidance.pdf>

In some roles where social distancing cannot be maintained or guaranteed, staff may wish to wear a face mask. Recently published guidelines can be found on the IOM Government website.

## Other OHR News

**Industrial JEGS Appeals**—The Industrial JEGS Appeal deadline has been extended to 30/9/20 in light of the current COVID-19 Pandemic.

### Wellbeing Initiatives:

- A dedicated confidential support line which is available to DHSC staff between 08.00 and 18.00 hours, 7 days a week on **687005** and is part of the welfare service
- For all keyworkers, childcare support is still available and has been enhanced to include childcare vouchers. The current availability can be found here: <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/health-and-social-care/registration-and-inspection-unit/>

### Training

Learning, Education and Development are launching new online training courses that have been created to help protect health and wellbeing.

This includes:

- Training for managing remotely to help managers to support and manage their teams
- Non-clinical Infection Prevention and Control designed for non-clinical staff on measures to be taken to control the spread of COVID-19
- Working from home during coronavirus (COVID-19). This course focuses on tips and techniques to help people adjust, create new routines, and make the most of remote working

eLearn Vannin is available for all staff across IOM Government. Requests for new accounts or password resets can be sent to [ellearnvanninhelp@gov.im](mailto:ellearnvanninhelp@gov.im)

## Annual leave during COVID-19 lock down

Whilst the Island's borders are closed and travel restrictions are in place further afield, individuals may be reticent to take annual leave and this is understandable, however annual leave is important to our wellbeing and mental health.

Many individuals' holiday plans will have changed over the past few weeks but it is important that where possible individuals take time to rest and recuperate.

Even where lockdown measures are eased travel restrictions (certainly outside the IOM and UK in potential holiday destinations) will remain in place, therefore wider or more varied options will not be available for some time to come.

Where possible individuals should be encouraged (not forced) to take annual leave or permitted to re arrange already booked annual leave.

## Facilitating a return to work, where it is safe to do so

Now that we are moving from the 'Stay at Home' to the 'Stay Safe' phase—(see full paper: <https://covid19.gov.im/media/1198/stay-safe-iom-government-medium-term-response-to-covid-19-cdim.pdf>) the aim is to ensure a measured transition towards 'the new normal'.

Measures will be put in place to ensure there is sufficient time to assess the impact of those measures.

There will be a phased return to work for those sectors which can go back to work and are low risk, because robust social distancing rules can be followed but with people continuing to work at home where required and able to do so.

The return to work must be balanced against the economic, social and health risks of doing so. All phased return to work will follow the following principles:

- Minimal person to person interaction
- Ability to maintain 2 metre social distance
- Ability to maintain strong hygiene practices

There is cross government working to ensure that working practices and work places comply with current legislation and advice from Public Health and buildings will be cleaned in line with the COVID-19 cleaning requirements. The Health and Safety Advisory Service has produced a guidance document entitled 'Planning for the Future Norm' and has also produced a Re-Occupancy of Buildings Work Place Ready Check List for employers. A variety of different personal risk assessments have been written for roles throughout the Public Service and individual risk assessments are being undertaken and Health and Safety Advisers are able to help with these.

**It is very important to reiterate that the return to work phase will be a gradual process and we are working to ensure that all the guidelines are adhered to before we can set this in motion.**

However, should individuals have any concerns about their work place, their working practices or any concerns about the use and issue of PPE, they should speak to their line manager in the first instance.

## Travelling off Island

Staff are strongly advised not to travel off-Island unless they have permission from a manager at Director level or above or other manager with delegated authority to do so.

Permission will only be granted in exceptional cases, where such approval will not adversely affect the ability of the public service to respond to the pandemic nor violate any restrictions on travel or movement by the employee in the destination country.

# STAY SAFE